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OLC 73-0613

7 May 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Conversation with Ralph Preston, House Appropriations
Committee staff, Re Watergate and Ellsberg Involvements

1. Today Ralph Preston called to say the Chairman would like a detailed written account of the Agency's involvement in the Watergate and Ellsberg matters so as to be able to answer questions likely to arise as a result of current press stories. He said he would like this material by Wednesday. I said we would be glad to provide the fullest record possible but there was still some missing links due to the fact that certain key personnel involved were not immediately available. I said that according to my understanding, the essential facts were as follows:

a. Sometime last summer General Cushman received a phone call from somebody in the White House--I was not quite sure who--requesting the loan of some equipment--I believe either a camera or tape recorder--for an unidentified purpose. He authorized the loan and somebody from the White House picked up the item from a TSD officer.

b. In the ensuing several weeks there was several followup requests from the recipient of the first item for additional items, including, besides the tape recorder and camera, disguise equipment, which we supplied.

c. It was apparently the impression of Agency people involved that this equipment was needed to investigate some sort of a security problem in the White House. There was never the slightest suggestion or suspicion that it was intended for the purposes for which it was actually used. At one time we were asked to develop certain photographs presumably taken with the camera we had supplied but these photographs were simply of an unidentified office building.



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d. After several of these requests for assistance, the TSD officers involved became concerned that the matter was getting out of hand, reported their concern to their superiors who agreed that we should refuse to honor further requests.

e. Since hearing reports of the break-in of Dr. Fielding's office one of our technicians remembered having kept copies of these photographs. Upon carefully reexamining them he has been able to decipher a small sign in front of the building identifying a reserved parking space as that of Dr. Fielding.

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f. So far as [REDACTED] of Ellsberg is concerned, I had never heard of this until the past few days, and understand that most of my senior colleagues had been equally in the dark. My impression is that this was in response to rather strong high-level requests and despite the misgivings of our Medical Staff.

2. I told Preston that the Director was expected to appear before the McClellan Subcommittee on Wednesday afternoon, and that we were pulling together all the facts as rapidly as possible which would of course be promptly made available to him and Chairman Mahon. Preston said at present Mahon had indicated no desire to have Agency representatives appear, but merely wanted a written record of the facts.

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[REDACTED]
JOHN M. MAURY
Legislative Counsel

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